

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-07

COME-00 FRB-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /080 W

----- 066891

R 101118Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2669

INFO COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK

CINCPAC, HONOLULU

UNCLAS BANGKOK 21570

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PINT ECON TH

SUBJECT: BUDGET BILL - SECOND READING

REF: BANGKOK

1. THE SECOND READING OF THE BUDGET BILL CONTINUED AT A STEADY, SLOW PACE, WITH THE COALITION CABINET STILL IN CONTROL. THE CABINET SURMOUNTED ONE OF THE MAJOR HURDLES ON OCTOBER 9 WHEN THE PARLIAMENT APPROVED BY A VOTE OF 135 TO 117, THE BUDGET OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, WHICH INCLUDED FUNDS FOR THE CONTROVERSIAL FREE BUS RIDE PROGRAM. THIS WAS THE NARROWEST MARGIN OF VICTORY YET FOR THE GOVERNMENT WHICH HAD WON ON OTHER ARTICLES BY MARGINS OF 70 VOTES. THIS WAS ALSO THE FIRST TIME THAT THE GOVERNMENT "WHIPS" MADE ANY EFFORT TO GET OUT THE VOTE.

2. DURING THE DEBATE PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT HAD CLEARLY MADE APPROVAL OF FUNDS FOR THIS PROGRAM AND FOR THE TAMBON IMPROVEMENT AND MEDICARE SCHEMES MATTERS OF CONFIDENCE FOR THE GOVERNMENT. CONSIDERATION OF THE TAMBON PROGRAM, WHICH BEGAN THE AFTERNOON OF OCTOBER 9 WAS COMPLETED THE AFTERNOON OF OCTOBER 10. IT WAS APPROVED 138 TO 76. THE MEDICARE PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

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SHORTLY.

3. COMMENTS: THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE PARLIAMENT WILL COMPLETE THE SECOND AND THIRD READINGS OF THE BUDGET BILL BEFORE THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEADLINE (OCTOBER 13), BUT WE WILL NOT PREDICT EXACTLY WHEN. AFTER DEBATE AND PASSAGE OF THE CONTROVERSIAL PROGRAM, THE GOVERNMENT, WITH THE ACQUIESCENCE OF THE OPPOSITION, PROBABLY WILL COMPLETE ACTION ON THE REMAINING ARTICLES OF THE BUDGET BILL HURRIEDLY AND THEN PASS IT QUICKLY ON THE THIRD READING.

WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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06 JUL 2006

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To: STATE
Type: TE
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